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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, NHON D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2179

DATE MAILED: 07/15/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/592,596

Applicant(s)

HUMPLEMAN ET AL.

Examiner

Nhon (Gary) D Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 September 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is responsive to Amendment B, filed 09/09/2003.
2. Claims 1-27 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 11, and 21 are independent claims. In the Amendment B, claims 1, 9, 11, and 19 are amended, and claims 21-27 are added. This action is made final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Saito et al ("Saito", US 6,523,696).

As per independent claim 1, Saito teaches a method for providing user interfaces in a first network including first devices interconnected via a communication medium and at least one interface device connecting said first network to at least a second network having interconnected second devices, the user interfaces for controlling the devices that are currently connected to the first network and devices that are currently connected to the second network, comprising the steps of:

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obtaining information from said first devices currently connected to the first network (*1st* and *2nd* *Home Network 203* of fig. 7), said information including graphical and/or textual information (col. 21, lines 5-10);

obtaining information from the interface device (*PC 210* of fig. 7) about the second devices connected to the second network, said information including graphical and/or textual information; and (*Home Automation Network 212* of fig. 7; col. 21, lines 50-60);

generating a user interface description in one or more of said first devices based at least on the obtained information, the user interface description in each first device including: at least one graphical and/or textual reference of said first devices that are currently connected to the first network, and at least one graphical and/or textual reference of said second devices that are currently connected to the second network (fig. 14, col. 23, lines 12-23).

As per claim 2, which is dependent on claim 1, Saito teaches said interface device includes information about the second devices (col. 21, lines 50-60).

As per claim 3, which is dependent on claim 1, Saito teaches the first network comprises a 1394 bus (*1st* and *2nd* *Home Network* of fig. 7), and the second network comprises a non-1394 bus (*Home Automation Network* of fig. 7).

As per claim 4, which is dependent on claim 3, Saito teaches the interface device includes an address extension table for the second devices, and wherein step of obtaining

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information from the interface device further includes the steps of using the address extension table to access said second devices (col. 24, lines 41-67 through col. 25, lines 1-3).

As per claim 5, which is dependent on claim 1, it is inherent in Saito's system that the PC device 210 (fig. 17B) would include a bridge device acted as an interface between the 2nd Home Network and Home Automation Network.

As per claim 6, which is dependent on claim 1, Saito teaches displaying one or more user interfaces each based on one of said one or more user interface descriptions, on one or more devices connected to the first network capable of displaying a user interface, for user control of said first and second devices (fig. 14, col. 23, lines 12-23).

As per claim 7, which is dependent on claim 6, Saito teaches the step of displaying each user interface further includes the steps of:

using each reference in the corresponding user interface description to access the associated information in each device; generating the user interface including device data corresponding to each device using the accessed information in each device; and displaying the user interface on said device capable of displaying a user interface (fig. 14, col. 23, lines 12-23).

As per claim 8, which is dependent on claim 1, Saito teaches the step of generating a user interface description further comprises the steps of: associating a

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hyper-text link with the device information of one or more of said first and second devices (col. 33, lines 57-67 through col. 34, lines 1-8).

As per claims 9 and 10, which are dependent on claims 1 and 9 respectively, Saito teaches the information in each device includes a user control interface description for user interaction with the device and the step of generating a user interface description further includes the steps of generating each user interface description such that each reference in that user interface description is to at least the user control interface description in each corresponding device (fig. 14, col. 23, lines 12-23 and col. 25, lines 35-49).

As per independent claims 11 and 21, they are similar in scope to claim 1; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claim 12, which is dependent on claim 11, it is a similar scope to claim 2; therefore, it should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claims 13 and 22, which are dependent on claims 11 and 21 respectively, they are similar in scope to claim 3; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claim 14, which is dependent on claim 13, it is a similar scope to claim 4; therefore, it should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claim 15, which is dependent on claim 11, it is a similar scope to claim 5; therefore, it should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claims 16 and 23, which are dependent on claims 11 and 21 respectively, they are similar in scope to claim 6; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claims 17 and 24, which are dependent on claims 16 and 23 respectively, they are similar in scope to claim 7; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claims 18 and 25, which are dependent on claims 11 and 21, they are similar in scope to claim 8; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claims 19 and 26, which are dependent on claims 11 and 21 respectively, they are similar in scope to claim 9; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

As per claims 20 and 27, which are dependent on claims 19 and 26 respectively, they are similar in scope to claim 10; therefore, they should be rejected under similar rationale.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 09/09/2003 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argued the following:

(a) In Fig. 7, Saito specifically shows a 1st HOME NETWORK comprising elements 201, 204, 206, and 207, and a 2nd HOME NETWORK comprising elements 203, 205, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, and 214. The Patent Office's interpretation is totally inconsistent with the teachings of Saito which specifically defines the first and second networks, and the elements thereof.

(b) The PC 210 in the second home network, is not an "interface device" as claimed herein.

(c) The user interface description is not an end display such as shown in Fig. 14 of Saito, rather, it is a source for generating user interfaces. The user interface description is created as an intermediate step between obtaining device information and generating user interfaces for display. Saito does not disclose such limitations, and the Patent Office has not shown where such a user interface description is taught by Saito.

(d) Saito does not describe a first and a second network wherein the first network is a 1394 bus network and the second network is a non-1394 bus network.

(e) Saito does not disclose an extension table include IP addresses for the second devices in the second network.

(f) Saito does not disclose that the interface device is a bridge device.

(g) Though in col. 23, lines 12-23, Saito mentions that a user can access a device using the screen on Fig. 14, there is no teaching that such a screen is generated using

links in a user interface description, to access device information of devices connected to the network, in order to generate an actual user interface for display and user interaction.

(h) Saito does not describe that the user interface description includes hyper-text links to information of the devices currently connected to the network. Saito does not disclose that the hyper-text links in the user interface description are used to access information associated with the devices currently connected to the network in order to generate a user interface for user interaction.

(i) Saito does not disclose that a device connected to the network has a specific user control interface therein, which is then accessed via a reference in a user interface description to generate a user interface that displays the specific user control interface of that device for user interaction.

The Examiner disagrees for the following reasons:

(a) A network can include several different networks within itself. In this case, Saito's 2nd HOME NETWORK (fig. 7) comprises two different networks which are 1394 BUS network 203 and HOME AUTOMATION network 212 (col. 18, lines 60-65). It still perfectly reads on the claim language as the first network and the second network respectively.

(b) According to the claim language, the interface device is used to connect the first network to the second network. PC 210 connects the first 1394 BUS 203 network devices 208, 209 and 211 to the second HOME AUTOMATION network devices 213 and 214 and allows the terminal devices connected to the 1394 BUS network (first

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network) to control the devices connected to the HOME AUTOMATION network 212 (second network) (col. 21, lines 40-50). Therefore, PC 210 is the interface device.

(c) In order to generate the graphical user interface in one of the terminal devices connected to the first 1394 BUS network as shown in fig. 14, the terminal devices connected to the 1394 bus have to obtain user interface description of the home automation network devices 212 stored in the configuration ROM (col. 21, lines 40-52 and col. 22, lines 15-26).

(d) Saito does teach a first and a second network wherein the first network is a 1394 bus network and the second network is a non-1394 bus network by stating “[t]he second home network comprises a second IEEE 1394 bus 203 and a home automation network 212.” And for the home automation network 212, “LON (Local Operating Network) of the Echelon corporation is used in this embodiment.”

(e) Since the assigned port addresses of the air conditioner 253 (fig. 16C) and the microwave oven 254 are registered information contents for which the PC 210 is the proxy, these port addresses have to be stored in form of a table of addresses.

(f) A bridge device is used to connect between two different networks. PC 210 connects the first 1394 BUS 203 network devices 208, 209 and 211 to the second HOME AUTOMATION network devices 213 and 214 and allows the terminal devices connected to the 1394 BUS network (first network) to control the devices connected to the HOME AUTOMATION network 212 (second network) (col. 21, lines 40-50). Therefore, PC 210 is also considered a bridge device.

(g) In order to generate the graphical user interface in one of the terminal devices connected to the first 1394 BUS network as shown in fig. 14, the terminal devices

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connected to the 1394 bus have to obtain user interface description of the home automation network devices 212 stored in the configuration ROM (col. 21, lines 40-52 and col. 22, lines 15-26).

(h) A home page that can be reached through a hyper link from an icon is generated by the user interface description depending on the devices connected to the network (col. 33, line 57 – col. 34, line 8); therefore, Saito does teach the user interface description includes hyper-text links to information of the devices currently connected to the network. Saito does not disclose that the hyper-text links in the user interface description are used to access information associated with the devices currently connected to the network in order to generate a user interface for user interaction.

(i) Every device connected to the network of fig. 7 has to have a specific user control interface so that it can be generated as icon in the fig. 14 (col. 23, lines 12-23 and col. 25, lines 34-59) and to be accessed and controlled by the display device through a reference in a user interface description as explained above in (c).

Conclusion

6. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

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extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.


Inquiries

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Nhon (Gary) D Nguyen whose telephone number is 703-305-8318. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 8 AM to 5:30 PM with every other Monday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kristine L Kincaid can be reached on 703-308-0640. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Nhon (Gary) Nguyen
July 09, 2004


SY D. LUU
PRIMARY EXAMINER